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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR AND RELATED MATTERS

Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

Report of the Administrator

I. PURPOSE

1. The present report is submitted to the Executive Board in response to paragraph 8 of Governing Council decision 93/12 of 18 June 1993.

II. BACKGROUND

2. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has had a significant impact on UNDP. Eighty-seven per cent of the country programmes in the fifth cycle includes components on environment and natural resource management and give greater attention overall to sustainable development.

3. Agenda 21 states clearly that the problems of poverty and environmental degradation are linked, as are their solutions. UNDP programmes at the country, regional and global levels are being designed to respond to this challenge through integrated approaches that focus on natural resource management as a means for improving the livelihood of the poor. Environmental overviews and assessments are included in most UNDP country programmes and projects. UNDP is seeking to integrate further the vision of Agenda 21 into its programme in the light of new challenges posed by changing global political and financial conditions. The need to deal with immediate crises diverts attention from longer-term processes of development. UNDP is emphasizing that priority attention must be given to preventive approaches and long-term development along with short-term relief efforts.

4. In promoting sustainable development UNDP focuses on people - their condition, their potential and their opportunities. The basic tenet is to enhance people's choices and to improve their living conditions. Human development will be successful only if it is people-centred, environmentally sound, participatory, and it if builds local and national capacity for self-reliance.

III. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME INITIATIVES

A. Strategies for sustainable development

5. The attempts in many countries to formulate sustainable and human development strategies have shown the common need for more holistic planning and conducive conditions. At the same time, there is a growing concern that the many requirements for action plans, strategies and profiles hamper effective coordination and implementation, and drain on already scarce resources.

6. UNDP is, therefore, conducting a series of country-specific studies that will analyse any existing planning framework, sector-specific plans that have been developed, who was instrumental in developing the plans, their "ownership" and how effectively the plans have been carried out. The studies are being undertaken in close consultation with the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED), the World Resources Institute (WRI), and bilateral donors. The analysis of these studies will help build better understanding of global needs and complexities of conceptual capacity-building.

7. Regional and country-specific seminars have been organized on natural resource accounting and integrated national accounts with the Statistical Division (UNSTAT) and on environment and trade with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The significance and importance of this area of competence for strategy development cannot be overemphasized.

B. Global programmes

8. UNDP continues to play an active role in the implementation of activities under the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol. UNDP is currently assisting 29 developing countries in the planning, preparation and implementation of country programmes, projects and sectoral activities to replace and phase out chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons and other ozone-depleting substances. Project funding of $38.3 million was approved during the period 1991 to 1994. It is expected that the remaining 1994 approvals could increase this amount to $60 million. Nine Montreal Protocol country programmes have been approved, China and India being the major ones. Five technology transfer investment projects have been completed, phasing out 372 tonnes of CFCs.

9. The third and final year of the pilot phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was dominated by restructuring and replenishment efforts. It is

anticipated that the GEF II Agreement will begin in 1994 with a commitment of $2 billion for the next three years. UNDP has been invited to continue serving as one of the three implementing agencies, focusing on capacity-building, pre-investment work and small grants. In the pilot phase, where responsibilities were similar, UNDP developed a work programme valued at $270 million, including 55 capacity-building projects and 19 pre-investment initiatives. The small grants programme was launched in 31 countries - more than 125 grants were awarded and more are being developed.

10. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) has provided substantive support to the preparatory process for the Global Convention on Desertification, promoting regional and subregional consultations and giving technical support to the preparation of Africa's contribution to the convention.

C. Sectoral programmes

11. The Forestry Capacity Programme supports countries in the management of National Forest Programmes (NFPs) conducted according to the Forest Principles established by UNCED. Capacity-building should involve all partners in the NFP, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and, in addition to institution-building, focus on strengthening capability in forest-sector planning and putting resulting plans into action. The Programme is supported by several do ors and is based on a set of criteria for participating countries. Support to NFPs concentrates on national capacity for broad involvement of stakeholders, an intersectoral approach, and efficient management and coordination of funding sources. There is close linkage with Capacity 21, including joint activities at the national level.

12. The principle thrust of the Capacity-building for Sustainable Water Sector Development programme is to assist countries to initiate capacity-building through assessments in the sector. Particular attention will be given to more effective water-sector management and to encourage integration between the water supply and sanitation subsector and the irrigation subsector.

13. The poverty/environment links to the traditional health-sector priorities will receive more emphasis in the future. Clean drinking water and sanitation activities will also continue to receive high priority within the linked areas of poverty and disease prevention. UNDP continues to support training of all levels of health personnel and improvement of management capacity.

14. The development of a sustainable energy strategy is one of the immediate initiatives in the present UNDP work programme. UNDP has at this point over 200 ongoing energy-related projects and several more that relate to a significant degree to energy.

15. Helping developing countries achieve sustainable food security is one of the primary objectives of UNDP and will become a significant programme actively collaborating with national agencies, FAO and other international institutions. UNDP aims to concentrate its investment in agriculture on alleviating hunger, to generate income and employment and to attempt to provide both greater service

and leadership. Sustainable agriculture is an important component although not the only one.

16. UNDP has several ongoing initiatives addressing the different problems of the urban environment as outlined in the annex.

D. Capacity-building programmes

17. Capacity 21 became fully operational in June 1993. To date, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and the United States have pledged a total of $33 million. Further support is expected in 1994. National Capacity 21 programmes have been initiated in 21 countries and preparatory activities are under way in a number of others.

18. UNDP, in close cooperation with UNEP, has elaborated a programme for capacity-building in environmental law in Africa. This programme will be implemented in 1994. It is fully complementary to Capacity 21 programmes at the country level.

19. The UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, in coordination with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), has sponsored the preparation of an overview of existing institutional capacity for sustainable development in the region, and suggests actions needed to strengthen this capacity.

E. Capacity-building through partnerships and participation

20. UNDP is an active participant in the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), using this forum for consultations with United Nations system partners. IACSD designated UNDP as task manager for capacity-building in the United Nations system.

21. The implementation of national agendas for sustainable development requires genuine participation of and ownership by the beneficiaries of development. UNDP has identified two main goals to this end: (a) to improve policy dialogue between Governments and organizations of civil society and (b) to meet major capacity-building needs of civil society.

22. Increased cooperation with indigenous people through their organizations and communities will ensure the continued application of the knowledge and customary practices of indigenous people.

23. Support has been given, through increased collaboration between the media and non-governmental organizations, for greater awareness in Asia and the Pacific of sustainable development issues, with a view to facilitating public participation in decision-making and policy formulation on these issues.

24. UNDP and several agencies, particularly FAO, UNEP and WHO, are collaborating on the production of a series of monographs on capacity-building

for sustainable development that will serve as reference material for Capacity 21 programmes.

25. The Children's Edition of Agenda 21 has been finalized and will be released in April 1994. It was developed through collaborative support from UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO and UNICEF under the coordination and lead role of an international non-governmental organization (NGO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Peace Child International. The Children's Edition was written and illustrated by youth from approximately 100 countries.

26. UNDP supports a series of networking activities to strengthen local institutions, to share relevant and replicable experiences, and to demonstrate local solutions. Stakeholders, farmers, NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) are among the principal target groups (see annex).

F. Strengthening the ability of UNDP to support environment and development initiatives

27. The Environmental Management Guidelines and the companion training programme facilitate a consistent approach to environmental aspects of UNDP projects. By the end of 1993, a total of 80 workshops have been held, providing training for approximately 2,200 individuals, including representatives of Governments, United Nations specialized agencies, NGOs, the private sector, the media and academia. Training in the remaining 45-50 country offices remains a priority for 1994.

28. Forty-one new national posts for sustainable development advisers were filled in early 1994. The new national staff members will assist the field-office team and their respective countries of service with advocacy and integration of environmental considerations into UNDP-supported national activities, and promote and support specific initiatives such as the Montreal Protocol, Capacity 21, the Global Environmental Facility, the Sustainable Development Network and other special programme initiatives.

IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

29. The Executive Board may wish to

Take note of the present report.

Annex

A. UNDP FACILITIES TO IMPROVE THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Urban Management Programme (UMP)

A global technical support programme designed to strengthen the contribution that cities and towns in developing countries make towards sustainable development, including economic growth, social development and poverty alleviation. UNDP provides core funding and overall monitoring, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS) is the executing agency and the World Bank an associated agency.

Public-Private Partnerships for the Urban Environment

In partnership with the Business Council for Sustainable Development (BCSD), this initiative aims at promoting concrete interactions between the public and the private sectors, having NGOs and the academic/scientific community as relevant supporting elements. The objective is to help the formation of mixed capital companies aimed at the pragmatic formation of improvement of the urban environment with relation to waste management, water/sanitation and energy issues.

Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)

The principal objective of LIFE is to promote "local-local" dialogue among municipalities, NGOs and CBOs to improve the quality of the urban environment. Through LIFE, developing countries and multilateral and bilateral donor agencies recognize the crucial role local authorities, NGOs and CBOs play in promoting sustainable urban environment and development.

Habitat II

UNDP is working closely with UNHCS to undertake preparatory activities for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). UNDP participated in both PrepCom meetings. In August 1994, UNDP and UNHCS are organizing the International Colloquium of Mayors as one of the preparatory activities for Habitat II.

Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

This programme is implemented in cooperation with UNCHS to assist Governments in developing and implementing policies concerned with the improvement of shelter conditions in developing countries.

B. UNDP FACILITIES TO FOSTER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development Network (SDN)

A global initiative launched in 1990 to make relevant country-specific information on sustainable development readily available to a wide range of development partners, including decision makers responsible for planning and implementing sustainable development strategies and CBOs. It is currently implemented in 8 countries with another 12 expected in 1994.

Sustainable Agriculture Networking and Extension Programme (SANE)

SANE is intended to have the non-formal sector lead with examples of community-based agro-ecological practices into the transformation of agricultural production approaches and resource conservation.

Farmer-Centred Agricultural Resource Management Programme (FARM)

FARM seeks to meet the needs of poor farmers in marginal lands in eight Asian countries using participatory approaches in the application of integrated pest management, safer pesticides, watershed management, farming systems, biotechnology and agroforestry.

Africa 2000 Network

The Africa 2000 Network is a pioneering UNDP programme to promote sustainable development in Africa by supporting community-based activities by people's associations and NGOs. It now operates in 13 countries. Almost 500 projects have been funded under the Network since its establishment, including 71 in 1993. Priority is being given currently to steps that will transform the Network from a UNDP project to an Africa-based, African-governed institution. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has just contributed an additional 1.6 million Canadian dollars to further this transformation and to provide support for other Network activities in the transitional period.

Asia-Pacific 2000 Network

Asia-Pacific 2000 is a subprogramme within the Urban Management Programme for Asia and the Pacific, receiving one quarter of the funds. Specifically it supports:

(a) Empowering the CSO infrastructure in addressing urban issues in an integrated manner;

(b) Promoting CSOs to develop local communities into self-driving entities in local development;

(c) Fostering dialogue between CSOs and local authorities.

Most recently UNDP is streamlining all small grants projects so that the same self-driven mechanisms at the national levels will achieve complementarities and cut down on administrative and financial services.